

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 09812 141853Z
ACTION EB-08

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TAGS: EAGR, WFC, UN, MX
SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL FOURTH SESSION

1. AFTERNOON SESSION OF THE FIRST DAY AND MORNING OF THE SECOND WERE DEVOTED TO GENERAL STATEMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. BERGLAND STATEMENT WAS WELL RECEIVED, WITH A NUMBER OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES REQUESTING COPIES. ALTHOUGH FRANCE REFERRED TO A PROPOSAL THEY MADE AT THE UN DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE CONCERNING CREATION OF A ONE BILLION DOLLARS FUND ACCUMULATED FROM REDUCTIONS IN ARMS EXPENDITURES, IT IS NOT LIKELY THEY WILL SEEK COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT. AUSTRALIA REITERATED THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE AT THE FAO COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY CONCERNING ITS PLANS TO INCREASE ITS FOOD AID FROM 250,000 TONS TO 400,000 TONS PER ANNUM WITH 40,000 TONS CHANNELLED THROUGH THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM. BOTH IBRD AND FAO OFFERED TO ASSIST IN ALL PHASES OF THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL FOOD STRATEGIES, ALTHOUGH FAO MADE CLEAR IT FELT NO NEW ARRANGEMENTS WERE REQUIRED.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 09812 141853Z

2. ASIDE FROM PLENARY DEBATE, WORKING GROUPS WERE FORMED TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (ODA) AND TRADE. THE TRADE GROUP, COMPOSED OF VENEZUELA, THE EC, MEXICO, THE U.S., AND ARGENTINA REMOVED BRACKETS ON ALL STATEMENTS BUT THE FOLLOWING CONCERNING THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES ON WHICH THE U. S.

RESERVED THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REFRAIN, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, FROM IMPOSING LIMITS ON THESE SYSTEMS. THE OPA GROUP HAS MADE NO HEADWAY IN RESOLVING THE MAJOR ISSUE, WHETHER TO ACCORD STATUS AS A TARGET TO THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT'S ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT OF \$8.3 BILLION IN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR AGRICULTURE. SIX OF THE EIGHT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ON THE COUNCIL HAVE JOINED IN A STATEMENT WHICH CLEARLY REAFFIRMS THE COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN AT MANILA (WHICH INCORPORATES LANGUAGE DIRECTLY FROM THE 1977 PARIS CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION) WITH FRANCE WAVERING AND THE POSITION OF THE NETHERLANDS UNCLEAR. THE EC WILL FORMULATE ITS COMMON POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT LATER TODAY. IT IS LIKELY ALL OECD COUNTRIES WILL BE UNITED. AT THAT POINT, THE CONFLICT WILL REMAIN ONLY AS LONG AS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES INSIST ON PRESSING IT. LUCEY

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